

FARM AND RANCH BULLETIN

Vol. 19, No. 3

March 1964

THE 1964 FEED GRAIN PROGRAM

As in previous years, the feed grain program for 1964 is entirely voluntary, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Participation in the program is a matter of individual decision by barley, corn, or grain sorghum producers. The farmer who grows more than one of these feed grains will have a total feed grain base for his farm and may make a choice of diverting, from the base acreage to conservation use, one or more of these feed grains. The base period is 1959-60. Although the provisions of the 1964 program were not available prior to the planting of fall barley, farms on which barley, corn, and/or grain sorghum were grown in 1959-60 may participate by reducing the acreage of such grains since these crops will have contributed to the farm feed grain base.

Two major improvements have been made in the feed grain program for 1964. First, as much as 50 percent of the total feed grain base may be diverted on any farm. This figure compares with the 1963 maximum of 40 percent of the feed grain base. Second, the average payment rate per acre for diverting 40 percent or more of the base will be substantially higher than in 1963.

One of the purposes of the feed grain program, according to the Department of Agriculture, is to raise farm income by assuring fair prices for feed grain producers and by providing a basis for stability in livestock prices. The program is aimed toward continuing the substantial progress toward a national goal of

reducing the feed grain carry-over to 45 to 50 million tons. Previous programs have already reduced the carry-over from 85 million tons to less than 60 million tons. Moreover, the program is designed to lower costs to taxpayers through savings on the storage cost of grain held in Government inventory.

Farmers who participate in this year's feed grain program will be eligible for diversion and price-support payments, as well as price-support loans, on their 1964 production of barley, corn, and grain sorghum. The price-support payments will be made to participants regardless of whether the feed grain produced this year is fed on the farm, sold, or placed under price-support loan.

According to the USDA, the principal points of the 1964 feed grain program are as follows.

1. The program is voluntary.
2. It applies to barley, corn, and grain sorghum, which together are referred to as the "total feed grain base."
3. In order to participate in the program, a farmer agrees to take out of production at least 20 percent of the total feed grain base for his farm.
4. The farmer who diverts as many acres as he signs up to divert, and otherwise complies with the program, earns a payment for acreage diversion and becomes eligible for the feed grain price support. However, he is not eligible for payments

or price support if the feed grain acreage exceeds the feed grain base on any other farm in which he has an interest.

5. Diversion payments based on the farm's established normal yield and the local price-support rate will be made on qualifying acreage taken out of production.
6. Price-support payments of 15 cents per bushel, based on the established normal yield for the farm, will be made on the 1964 acreage of corn. A similar payment will be made on barley at 12 cents per bushel and on grain sorghum at 23 cents per hundredweight. The same per bushel and per hundredweight price-support rates will apply to all complying farms.
7. Advance payments for diversion — up to one-half of the amount of the diversion payment for taking feed grain acreage out of production — may be made upon request at signup time.
8. Price-support loans, purchase agreements, and the price-support payment for corn, barley, and grain sorghum will be available only to those who sign up to take at least 20 percent of the total feed grain base for their farms out of 1964

crop production and devote that acreage to conservation uses and maintain the acreage normally placed in conservation uses on the farm. Price-support loans and purchase agreements for those who take part in the program will be available for their entire 1964 output of barley, corn, and grain sorghum.

Growers who cooperate with the Government in an effort to continue the reduction of feed grain supplies will thus receive financial returns for acreage diverted from feed grain production, plus support prices, including price-support payments, for the feed grains they produce.

Although the program is entirely voluntary, producers who choose not to participate will be ineligible for price support on corn, grain sorghum, or barley.

Forms to be used by farmers in declaring their intentions to participate in the 1964 feed grain program may be obtained from Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASC) county offices. The signup period began February 10, 1964, and extends through March 27, 1964.

Growth Retardants for Annuals

Dr. Henry M. Cathey, Horticulturist with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, has reported the successful use of chemical growth retardants in making many garden flower annuals compact and more desirable for beddings or small landscape areas.

The retardants can be applied as leaf sprays to annuals without regard for the day length to which the plants are exposed. This feature is in contrast to the use of retardants on certain perennials on which the treatment is ineffective unless combined with applications of supplemental light in a greenhouse.

Retardants used in the ARS experiments were B995 and phosphon-S. The annuals tested were bachelor buttons, China asters, cleomes, cosmos, marigolds, petunias, salvia, and zinnias.

Fowl Cholera Defies Control

Although it is one of the oldest recognized poultry diseases, fowl cholera has defied control by scientists ever since Pasteur made the first pure culture in 1880, states Dr. Chester Meinecke, Veterinary Microbiology Department, College of Veterinary Medicine, A&M University.

Despite years of work on its control, fowl cholera is still a major problem in Texas, and the incidence of the disease is rising says Dr. Meinecke. Bacterins used to treat fowl cholera are sometimes effective and sometimes of little value, depending upon which type of organism has been used to make the bacterin or is causing the disease.

The organism's tendency to resist medication and build a drug tolerance has caused research-

ers to use many drugs in attempts to control the disease. Fowl cholera varies from acute to chronic in its effect. With drug-caused alterations in the disease, fowl cholera is doubly difficult to diagnose, points out the veterinarian.

In order to eradicate fowl cholera from a flock, a depopulation and clean-up program must be followed. Although disposal of the entire flock is not always necessary, cleaning of the poultry house is essential. All organic matter, together with 3 or 4 inches of the dirt floor (if the house has one), should be removed. The building should then be scrubbed, disinfected, sunned, and aired before the birds are replaced. Dr. Meinecke says that Texas poultry producers must observe basic sanitation practices and obtain more professional help in order to bring poultry diseases, especially fowl cholera, under control.

There Is A Difference

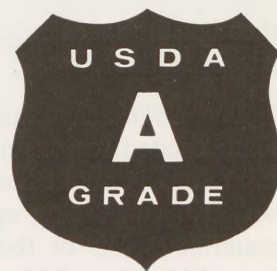
Most people know that American poultry is processed under close Federal supervision, but there still seems to be some question about the difference between poultry inspection and grading, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. These are two separate operations, performed by different people, for different purposes. However, both operations are done by the AMS.

Poultry inspection is an examination of the bird during slaughter and processing to insure that it is wholesome and suitable for human consumption. This inspection is required by law for all poultry moving in interstate and foreign commerce.

Poultry grading is an examination of the bird during processing to determine its level of quality. Grading is available to packers on a voluntary basis, but it is not required. About one-half of the poultry sold in the United States is federally graded.

The inspection mark is circular, as shown in the accompanying illustration. The consumer is assured that birds bearing this mark are safe to eat, assuming that they have been properly handled after inspection. Every bird with an inspection mark has been individually inspect-

ed for wholesomeness by a trained USDA expert under the supervision of a fully qualified licensed veterinarian.



The grade mark is shield-shaped, as shown in the illustration. Grade A is the top grade. Poultry rating this grade has the highest meat yield, is well finished, and has the finest appearance. Most buyers prefer Grade A poultry if the bird is to be carved at the table. Grade B is the second highest grade. Birds of this grade may be slightly lacking in meatiness and finish and may have dressing flaws.

According to the AMS, there are no levels of wholesomeness in poultry inspection. The bird either is found to be wholesome or is rejected and cannot be packed and sold. While all graded poultry is inspected, not all inspected poultry is graded.

Polystyrene Foam for Cushioning Watermelon Shipments

Better protection for watermelons shipped in railroad refrigerator cars may be obtained through the use of expanded polystyrene foam for cushioning melon loads, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Preliminary studies by the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service show that rail shipments of melons in the conventional five-layer loads, cushioned by the plastic foam, incur only about one-half as much damage as those cushioned with hay or straw. Loads six or seven layers high, cushioned with the plastic foam, also have fewer damaged melons than loads of the same size in which hay or straw is used.

Melons loaded on strips of polystyrene foam average 1 to 6 degrees cooler during transit than those shipped on hay or straw bedding. This difference in temperatures results from

improved air movement through the plastic-cushioned loads. Straw or hay bedding on the floor almost completely prevents air circulation upward through the load. Air movement through the loads helps to reduce overheating and spread of decay.

The USDA says that the cost of the plastic foam needed for cushioning a refrigerator car of melons is about the same as that for straw bedding. Depending upon the thickness of the materials, costs of the foam cushioning vary from \$11.25 to \$14 per car, compared with \$12 to \$15 for straw.

Other advantages of using polystyrene foam, rather than hay or straw, are:

1. Precut strips of polystyrene foam supplied in rolls are more easily and quickly applied than hay or straw bedding.

2. The foam cushioning permits the melons to nest in each compressed area. The material also acts as a frictionizing agent and prevents sliding of the melons more effectively than does straw or hay.

3. The material does not absorb or retain moisture from condensation or from cracked or decayed melons, as is the case with hay or straw bedding.

4. Cars cushioned with plastic foam are noticeably cooler during loading, and there is no straw chaff or dust in the air to irritate the loaders' eyes and noses.

Trapping Boll Weevils

A blue-green light may someday be used to trap boll weevils, the number one cotton insect pest, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The weevils were attracted to the light source, under laboratory conditions, in studies conducted by the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in cooperation with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

An effective light attractant would give cotton producers another new weapon in their fight against the boll weevil. This pest has destroyed around \$10 billion worth of cotton since entering the United States in the 1890's.

In order to study the potential use of light traps against the boll weevil, the scientists placed adult weevils in the base of a Y-shaped tunnel. The end of each arm of the Y held a light of different color and intensity. After approximately 10 minutes, the scientists checked to determine which light attracted the most weevils.

Light traps are now used primarily as a survey tool to determine the presence of various insects and to trace their movements. Field traps equipped with a source of "black light" (near ultraviolet in color value) have attracted pink bollworms, cabbage loopers, and tobacco budworms. However, similar efforts against boll weevils have been unsuccessful.

Grain Sorghum Pigments Studied

The Indiana University Foundation, under contract with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, will conduct research to identify pigments and related compounds that color and flavor grain sorghum and its products. This contract research is aimed at providing a basis for future studies on avoiding discoloration of sorghum products, such as starch, and on avoiding bitterness in sorghum feeds.

The isolation and characterization of pigments from varieties of milo or kaffir sorghums will be studied under the Indiana contract. In addition, tests will be made to determine the response of these pigments to bleaching and other treatments.

Earlier USDA studies show that, in addition to pigments, sorghum grain contains unidentified colorless compounds that are converted to colored ones by acid. These compounds could discolor sorghum products that should remain white. Moreover, they are believed to cause bitterness.

The dairy cow is the world's greatest food factory, according to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. On the average, this animal's production from an acre of crops totals 2,190 pounds of milk, which contain 72 pounds of digestible protein and 712 units (therms) of energy.